



South Mountain Freeway route is in limbo

Phoenix asks to defer Ahwatukee decision

Kerry Fehr-Snyder

The Arizona Republic

May. 16, 2007 12:00 AM

Phoenix is asking for more time in the fight over the proposed South Mountain Freeway through Ahwatukee.

Phoenix Councilwoman Peggy Neely persuaded the executive committee of the Maricopa Association of Governments in April to wait 30 days before asking Gov. Janet Napolitano to intervene in the freeway fight. But the 30 days came and went. The committee didn't reconsider the issue when it met Monday. Neither the Phoenix City Council nor the governor has taken a public position on the freeway route.

The committee proposed asking Napolitano to talk to the Gila River Indian Community about building the freeway on tribal land instead of along Pecos Road.

A draft letter expressed frustration by the MAG executive committee, which is composed of Neely and the mayors of Mesa, Gilbert, Scottsdale, Surprise, Goodyear and Litchfield Park.

"Before the MAG Executive Committee formally requests in a letter that the Governor intervene on the location of the South Mountain Freeway, we should be cognizant of deliberations taking place and not have MAG weigh in before we have more facts," Neely wrote in an April 16 e-mail obtained by *The Arizona Republic*.

Tribal spokeswoman Alia Maisonet, said Tuesday that the tribe is not negotiating over the freeway and has not met with MAG or other leaders, although it talks regularly with state officials about various transportation issues.

"One of Gila River Indian Community's biggest concerns on the South Mountain Freeway on or off the reservation is the environmental impacts that will occur in this part of the valley," she said in an e-mail Tuesday.

What do you think?

Post a comment about this article

• [Click here](#) to post a comment (Quick Click login required; [register now](#) -- it's free)

Current Page: 1 of 2

Goto Page: 1 2 Next

Your comments

Just make a decision. I have had my house on the market sense last January, but because it is in the path of the proposed freeway I am not able to sell it. As long as the freeway decision remains in limbo I'll remain in limbo.

So please just make a decision to either put the freeway down Pecos or to put it somewhere else so I can move on. (Larry553, May 17, 2007 11:41AM)

Yeah Ron let's just tear up the useless Indian land that we gave to them to live on as a compromise for taking away the desirable land way back when. All of sudden its desirable again when good for the white people. As far as I'm concerned all of you are illegal aliens who stole the Indian land and should go back whence you came. The freeway should be built according to plans. The sooner the better as far as I'm concerned. I have lived in Ahwatukee for over ten years now anticipating its construction. Let's get on with it. (Ralph1999, May 17, 2007 10:47AM)

Let's go on with it, people. There's no question it needs to happen. And, the longer our "government" keeps up this interminable delaying, the more it's costing us all. This extra money for every day we delay is money better spent on other needy programs. Get off your duffs, and get 'er done! (Kim9577, May 17, 2007 12:11AM)

Don't whine about the people of Ahwatukee. They work hard, have prospered, and created a wonderful community that has one of the highest values in Metro Phoenix. They are merely protecting what your local government allowed to be created.

You are obviously NOT and NEVER WILL BE financially successful if you begrudge this fact.

The freeway will actually be built faster and will be less costly to your, if built on the reservation.

There will be no homes to destroy, no infrastructure (electric lines, water pipes, gas pipes, existing roads) to tear up and no environmental lawsuits. (Ron417, May 16, 2007 04:02PM)

They made a decision where this thing should go about 20 years ago. People didn't like it then and people don't like it now. But we'll all love it when it's in and operating. So build it and let's all get on with our lives. (Scott1995, May 16, 2007 02:26PM)

I am really getting tired of the NIMB syndrome (Not In My Backyard). All of these folks (people either in Ahwatukee or GRIC) use the freeway system and don't complain when they are on it going different areas of the valley but when it now is looking to come through their neck of the desert then its an issue. I have more understanding for GRIC but not on the premise they are giving. I drive through the reservation and I see all of the trash, abandon cars, abandon houses, etc and they are worried about the environmental impact of the freeway. If that is the case then they need to be out there insuring that their reservation is kept clean and not turned into a huge junk heap.

Now the people in Ahwatukee, I have no sympathy for. These people feel that their view is more important than the views of others. This is just pathetic, who cares what a bunch of spoiled people in Ahwatukee think about this. The building of this freeway will benefit all to include them but since it will be in their backyard it is now an issue.

I say build it along Pecos Rd and tell the people in Ahwatukee to move if they don't like it. (Nonya Biznaz (47), May 16, 2007 02:14PM)

This whole situation drives me insane. The city, ADOT, and the Governor have absolutely no backbone on this issue whatsoever. They are terrified of a few whinning residents in a tiny suburb in a city of millions. The tribe will make the state pay dearly for using their land to save a few homes from being demolished. And the rest of

us will feel the impact in our pocketbooks. This while the residents who moved into that Ahwatukee neighborhood knew all along that their land was set for freeway development long before they got there. Well guess what, the needs of the many far outweigh the needs of the few. To ADOT and the Governor, grow a backbone and tell those residents to get lost while we plow our way towards a better freeway system. (Mark1295, May 16, 2007 02:09PM)

A year ago, MAG made a big production of how they carefully chose the western leg of the South Mountain Freeway, using engineering studies and input from the affected political entities.

Three months after their decision, I asked specific questions such as: predicted traffic loads for each of the 3 choices, traffic mix predictions, travel time predictions, etc. I was told this information would be available for THEIR use by March 2007!!!! Now they are saying it will be available early next year. Given this news, what criteria, what engineering data, what anything did they base their so-called carefully deliberated decision on? The only conclusion possible is pure politics. MAG had no intention of using the most logical terminus (Loop 101/I-10 interchange). If and when this freeway is ever completed, we will be saddled with an obsolete freeway that will do nothing to move people AROUND the clogged downtown area with any degree of speed. Their logic dictates that we drive INTO the city to go around it. Huh??

The City of Phoenix said choose our route because we have been zoning and planning for a commercial corridor that can make use of all those lanes, yet the commission flat out stated that truck traffic will not increase in any way, shape, or form. Huh?

The City of Tolleson stated categorically any construction thru their town would be too expensive and destroy the city. To complicate matters even more, the city purposely and deliberately approved construction in the planned corridor with the express purpose of sabotaging the freeway.

Both cities accomplished their goals: spending lots of our money with no appreciable gain in any area. I say to both, "Shame on you". (Alan9190, May 16, 2007 01:34PM)

I'm so bored with this issue. Just build the freeway already. Build it on Pecos Rd. Build it just south of Pecos on the Indian Reservation. Whatever. The Indians whine. The Ahwatukee NIMBY's whine. Whatever. It's time for my nap now. (David6533, May 16, 2007 01:04PM)

No one has taken the South Mountain Freeway seriously from the very start. After more than 10 years the southern portion has yet to be nailed down. The western portion terminates in the most assinine of locations, yet the politicians keep saying they are making progress. Not sure how they are gauging it though. (Alan9190, May 16, 2007 01:03PM)

Environmental impact? What? That land is too desolate for field mice to live on. It's a perfect place for a road. I bet the Gila community won't complain about having an alternative to I-10 to get into town on. Plus, it'll make the casinos more accessible to the development communitites on the west side. (Max2421, May 16, 2007 12:48PM)

Hmmmm. So they (the Indian's) say one of their biggest concerns is the "Environment"...If any of you have ever driven the the Res. East of the 101 you will clearly see they (the Indians that live there) do give a rats @#\$\$%& about the environment. Garbage all over the place. Multiple cars on a lot leaking oil into the ground. Stray dogs and cats every where. Their excuse is the biggest bunch of garbage...pun intended. Personally, I feel this is

politically and financially motivated by both sides. The Indians would look more legitimate if they just came out and said rather than use the ol "environment" scapegoat excuse. I am from Connecticut where two separate Indian groups have found a way to create Two of the largest and most successful Casino's in the country. Whats going on with the ones out here???? Long story short. If Phoenix wants to maintain it's status as an attractive place to live Transportation needs to be drastically improved, which includes the South Mountain Freeway...so make it happen people before the problem gets worse...which it can.(**chris6245**, May 16, 2007 12:46PM)

JUST BUILD IT!!! Stop fartin' around! This @\$%& freeway extension has been talked about for 10, 20 years now. If they wait another 10 years it'll cost double and the metro area population will be 4 million+.

Think about all the cars and semis that would use the S. Mtn. freeway instead of going through the heart of the city. How nice would that be! This should've been constructed years ago. I'm afraid it'll be put off for years to come and that makes absolutely no sense. I'm a taxpayer and I say get out there and start building it today. Hell, give me a bulldozer and I'll show you how it's done.(**jeff40**, May 16, 2007 11:55AM)

Phoenix is the fourth largest city. My commute from west phoenix to chandler take a hour between 5am and 6am, build the freeway find a way, it was done on BOB!(**andy0020**, May 16, 2007 11:54AM)

I live AND work in Tempe.

I don't give a rat's @\$%& about freeways.(**Ching6002**, May 16, 2007 11:52AM)

Current Page:1 of 2

Goto Page: 1 2 Next